

## News from the Savannah River National Laboratory

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### SRNL Supports Secretary Energy Abraham's Science Education Initiative

AIKEN, S.C. – The U.S. Department of Energy's (DOE) Savannah River National Laboratory, the country's newest national lab, is aiding in the U.S. Department of Energy's new initiative to promote science education and help prepare the next generation of scientists and engineers.

U.S. Secretary of Energy Spencer Abraham announced the new national initiative today, which strongly links to the existing programs at the Savannah River Site.

"Secretary Abraham's commitment to science education complements the longstanding partnership the Savannah River Site has had with our local schools," said Dr. Todd Wright, Director Savannah River National Laboratory. "Through our education outreach programs, we seek to promote the curiosity, appreciation and awareness of science and mathematics so that young people's desire for discovering how things work is translated into an interest in science, and interest to consider a career in science or engineering."

"It is critical that we leverage the resources of this Department -- and of all our national labs -- to help create a new generation of scientists who will achieve the scientific breakthroughs and technological advances so essential to our future security and

prosperity," Secretary Abraham told a gathering of researchers and graduate students at the Stanford Linear Accelerator Center, a DOE national lab.

Secretary Abraham outlined a seven-step program named STARS: Scientists Teaching and Reaching Students. The program is designed to enhance the training of America's mathematics and science teachers; grow students' interest in science and math, and spotlighting the work of DOE's scientists and engineers, and thereby encourage young people and prospective teachers to pursue careers in math and science.

The Savannah River Site has long supported the promotion of science and mathematics in area schools. Through its Education Outreach Program, SRS's scientists, engineers and technical staff partners with the education community in the following programs:

**Mini Grants** - a competitive program for CSRA public schools to provide grants to teachers to enhance elementary and middle school science, math and technology curricula. Since the program began in 1989, Westinghouse Savannah River Company has awarded nearly \$600,000 to over 1,200 teachers to fund 1,096 projects.

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**Traveling Science and Mathematics Demonstrations Projects** - a partnership between the University of South Carolina Aiken's Ruth Patrick Science centers and SRS, which provides volunteer scientists and engineers to teach chemistry, biology and physics. SRS volunteers have provided demonstrations to over 20,700 students and teachers in the CSRA through the Traveling Science Demonstration Program.

**Environmental Science** - sponsorship of the Science Education for Public Understanding Program (SEPUP), the JASON™ Project and other environmental science workshops for science teachers. Sixty-seven teachers from the CSRA have attended SEPUP and JASON workshops.

**DOE Savannah River Regional Science Bowl** - an annual academic competition for students in areas of biology, chemistry, physics, mathematics, earth sciences, computers and astronomy. Sixteen teams (over 80 students) from Georgia and South Carolina participated in this year's Science Bowl.

**School-to-Work** - a partnership with CSRA school districts and local technical colleges to provide students with first-hand knowledge of careers in math, science engineering and technology. Since its inception in 1994, the program employed over 400 high school and post secondary students.

*Other programs include:*

**Internship & Faculty Participant Program** - educational and research opportunities to teachers and undergraduate, graduate and post graduate students, as well as university faculty. Over 1,000 students and teachers have participated in the program since its inception.

**National Engineers Week** - engineers, scientists and technicians visit schools to encourage middle school students to peruse technically-oriented careers. In 2004, SRS engineers, scientist and technicians reached approximately 23,000 middle school students in 11 counties in Georgia and South Carolina.

**CSRA Science and Education Fair** - promotes students' interest by providing public recognition of outstanding work and by giving students the opportunity to interact with community scientists and engineers. This year, over 350 volunteers from SRS and other local businesses judged over 14,000 science projects from elementary, middle and high schools.

**Technology Days** - uses exhibitions, demonstrations and speakers in scientific, technical and engineering disciplines to motivate middle school students to pursue a career in engineering and science. Nearly 3,000 students from Georgia and South Carolina attended Technology Days 2004 at the Fort Discovery.

**Introduce a Girl to Engineering** - encourages girls to consider engineering, science and technology-related careers. Fifty girls from 24 middle schools interacted with female professionals while learning about the career opportunities in science and engineering.

The Savannah River Site also provides a variety of science literacy, outreach and education programs in the CSRA through the efforts of the University of Georgia Savannah River Ecology Laboratory and the USDA Forest Service-Savannah River.

**The Savannah River Ecology Laboratory** targets schoolchildren and their teachers through lectures, field trips, teacher workshops, and tours. Over 13,600 school children were reached by these programs during academic year 2002-2003. In addition, SREL provides research experience for college students, primarily juniors and seniors, considering careers in ecological disciplines. Since 1967, more than 600 undergraduate students have participated in the program.

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**The U.S. Department of Agriculture's Forest Service** - Savannah River administers two cooperative agreements with universities in support of math, science and technology education. The Savannah River Environmental Sciences Field Station, administered through South Carolina State University, has had 599 students attend classes since 1998. Its goal is to inform minority students of potential careers in environmental science, environmental engineering, natural resources and agriculture.

**The Natural Resources Science, Mathematics and Engineering Education Program**, administered through the University of South Carolina, has hosted nearly 103,500 student visits and 103 teacher workshop since 1998. The pre-college program provides outdoor classroom experiences for South Carolina and Georgia students with a target population of educationally disadvantaged students.

More information about all of the components of the Department Of Energy's science education initiative, the text of the Secretary's remarks and information about the labs' science education offerings are available via the Internet at: [www.science.doe.gov](http://www.science.doe.gov)

Teachers and students can learn more about the Savannah River Site's science education initiative by visiting [http://www.srs.gov/general/outreach/edoutrch/ed\\_home.htm](http://www.srs.gov/general/outreach/edoutrch/ed_home.htm)

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